

What is Claimed is:

1 1. A method for surveying an online user comprising the
2 steps of:

3 (1) presenting a first item to the user over a
4 distributed network;

5 (2) presenting a questionnaire to the user over the
6 distributed network if the user selects the first item;

7 (3) accepting and storing the user's first response
8 to the questionnaire;

9 (4) repeating, at least one time, steps 1-2 and
10 accepting and storing the user's subsequent response(s)
11 to the questionnaire; and

12 (5) performing online sustainability testing by
13 comparing the user's first response to the user's
14 subsequent response(s).

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of
2 performing online sustainability testing further
3 comprises correcting or correction for a skewed result.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of
2 presenting a first item further comprises presenting a
3 second item and wherein the questionnaire asks about the
4 first and second items.

1 4. The method of claim 3, wherein the step of
2 presenting a questionnaire to the user only occurs if the
3 user selects both the first and second items.

1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the distributed
2 network is the Internet.

1 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of presenting
2 a first item to the user is done by a first entity and
3 the step of performing online sustainability testing is
4 done by a second entity.

1 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the first entity is
2 an online vendor and the second entity is a producer of
3 the item.

1 8. The method of claim 7, wherein the producer shares
2 results from the online sustainability testing with the
3 online vendor.

1 9. The method of claim 7, wherein the producer gives
2 the item to the online vendor.

1 10. The method of claim 7, wherein the producer offers
2 the item exclusively to the online vendor during the
3 survey of the online consumer.

1 11. The method of claim 1, wherein the item is a snack
2 food product.

1 12. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps
2 of:

3 performing offline sustainability testing; and
4 comparing the results of the online and offline
5 sustainability testings.

1 13. The method of claim 1, wherein the questionnaire is
2 a CGI script, JAVA, or PERL applet.

1 14. The method of claim 1, wherein the first response to
2 the questionnaire is transmitted over the distributed
3 network.

1 15. The method of claim 14, wherein the first response
2 to the questionnaire is transmitted in XML.

1 16. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step
2 of assigning an identifying code to the user, wherein the
3 first response and the subsequent response(s) are
4 associated using the identifying code.

1 17. The method of claim 16, wherein the identifying code
2 is a cookie.